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VIEWS

CHILD LABOR VS.
CHILD ABUSE.....by Joyce F. Jones

REVIEWS

THE WRONG VILLAIN

a review of Michael Harrington's
The Other America.....by Elenore Boddy

JOAN KENNEDY TAYLOR, editor 50¢

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VIEWS

Child Labor vs. Child Abuse

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Capitalism has been frequently attacked or undermined by ideas which linger long after their validity has been challenged and refuted. One such idea is that child labor is synonymous with child abuse. Many people automatically picture instances of maltreatment, sexual violation and exploitation which seem to them to prove that children were the helpless pawns of businessmen during the Industrial Revolution, when the economies of England and America were largely unregulated. It does not occur to them that just because child labor can be child abuse, this does not prove that child labor, per se, is child abuse. They do not think of the obvious answer that laws should be more stringent against maltreatment and any kind of fraud. Instead, for half a century or more, they have supported legislation that has deprived children of the right to work for money--legislation which is but one aspect of the growing U.S. Welfare State. Our economy makes children, in fact, the helpless pawns of bureaucratic machinery--natural resources to be preserved for the benefit of "society" at large.

I would like to present some instances of inequities that post-date the child labor laws. Picture the following:

> --A brilliant young boy in a large city, the oldest of eight children, finishes high school at age thirteen. He has a chance to study engineering at one of the best universities in the country, if he can scrape together enough money. A tragic accident leaves the family destitute and fatherless. Now, even with a full scholarship, he cannot accumulate

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enough money to begin college soon, unless he works full-time for at least one year. But he is legally a "child" and the law does not permit him to be "subjected" to the rigors of a regular job.

--Two friends live in a small town. Johnny is interested in becoming an actor; George, a violinist in an orchestra. Because child labor laws allow him to work, Johnny begins his career at age eleven. His friend must wait until his particular state's law says he is old enough to be a professional musician. Working at night in a play is not "oppressive"; working at night in an orchestra evidently is.

--In a rural section of the United States, a young twelve-year-old boy rises at dawn each day, helps first his father and then a neighbor milk herds of dairy cows before going to school. When he comes home, he works in the fields on the two farms in the afternoons and helps to milk the same two herds of cattle in the evenings. His teacher complains of his frequent absences from school during harvesting and planting seasons. But because he is engaging in physical labor in what "humanitarians" seem to regard as the non-abusive rural Garden of Eden, he is able to save his earnings for a college education, a new car, or anything else he wants.

These pictures give us something to think about. Would you consider child labor in these examples, in the context of a modern economy, to be synonymous with child abuse? I think not. The labor does not seem abusive, the laws do. They create

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a situation in which, by an accident of birth, boys in rural areas or those with certain specialized talents have a distinct economic advantage in the United States, if they care to avail themselves of it. Child labor laws are not stringently applied to them, and even without the necessity of working, they are free to work in order to achieve personal goals. Their peers, however, are "protected" from the "exploitation" which many people agree would be inherent in any unregulated economy which permits children to work.

In an era which includes such a disturbing problem as juvenile delinquency, coupled with the self-destructive behavior of "hippies" who seem proud of or unconcerned about the effects of idleness, venereal disease and dope, I think that the child-labor-equals-child-abuse premise needs to be challenged by anyone who has a genuine concern for young people.

Let's start at the beginning--a hundred years or so ago. In the early nineteenth century and thereafter, there were increasing demands for child labor laws in England and America, and people usually think that these were intended to protect children from maltreatment caused by "inhuman" businessmen. It has been demonstrated by libertarian economic historians that the so-called "abuses" of the early Industrial Revolution were the result of the struggle for survival of both adults and children and that child labor was ended, not by government fiat, but by capitalism itself. Capitalism raised the standard of living in free countries to a point where it was no longer economically necessary for most children to earn money because their parents could support them. (See Robert Hessen's article, "The Effects of the Industrial Revolution on Women and Children," in

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Ayn Rand's *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*, New York: The New American Library, 1967.)

In the United States, the first state law establishing a minimum working age for children was passed in Pennsylvania in 1848. In the next half century, many states passed laws limiting working hours for children. These laws were not very strictly enforced, and advocates of "social welfare" began to agitate for national child labor legislation.

Prior to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938, three unsuccessful attempts were made to control child labor by federal legislation: (1) the Child Labor Act (Keating-Owen Act) of 1916, which barred from interstate and foreign commerce the products of child labor; (2) the Revenue Act of 1919 which levied a 10 per cent tax on the profits of certain industries employing child labor; (3) the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933. All of these laws were declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court on the grounds that Congress was exceeding its power. In June 1924, the 68th Congress adopted a resolution for an amendment to the Constitution giving it the power to limit, regulate and prohibit the labor of children under eighteen. By 1937, only 28 of the necessary 36 states required had ratified the amendment; it was dropped after the FLSA was passed.

In 1937 and 1938, the United States suffered a severe economic downturn. All of the previous measures taken by President Roosevelt had not eased the Depression, and in 1938 there were still 11 million men unemployed. To help alleviate this condition, the President requested passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The overtime provisions

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of the Act and the restrictions of child labor were intended to spread work among the unemployed by shortening the work week and preventing children from competing with men for jobs.

The Fair Labor Standards Act applied to enterprises which engaged in or affected interstate commerce (manufacturing, transportation, communications, public utilities, etc.). It established a minimum wage of 40 cents an hour and time-and-a-half for any work over 40 hours. The minimum wage has been amended to 75 cents an hour in 1949; $1, in 1955; $1.25, in 1963; and $1.50, in 1966.

Among other provisions, the Act prohibited (1) the shipment of goods in interstate or foreign commerce which were produced in establishments where "oppressive" child labor had been employed within 30 days prior to shipment. Oppressive child labor was defined as employment of children sixteen to eighteen in occupations declared hazardous by the Secretary of Labor or under sixteen in any job (exempted were child actors, farm laborers, children employed by their families or who worked after school hours). In 1949, the child labor provisions were considerably strengthened by narrowing the agricultural exemption, and by directly forbidding the use of "oppressive" child labor under any circumstances. In 1961, the coverage was widened to include large retail and service firms, thus affecting about 27.5 million persons out of a labor force of over 70 million persons. Following the 1961 amendments, the child labor provisions applied almost universally. Exempted were the following: newspaper delivery boys, child actors, children working on farms outside school hours, home workers on evergreen wreaths, children working in local retail and service firms making no deliveries across state lines and not otherwise subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act.

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The Fair Labor Standards Act was upheld as constitutional by the Supreme Court in 1941 (U.S. vs. Darby Lumber Co.). Commerce was held to be a complete function, controllable by Congress to the point of prohibition. No longer were state and federal spheres mutually exclusive.

What is the effect of these child labor laws on children today? Their stated purpose is to protect the poor and destitute--the very group that one would think would profit most by their repeal. A school dropout, a potential juvenile delinquent, a poverty-stricken boy who desperately needs money, a youngster whose family has been struck by misfortune, the young boys and girls who live in the Appalachias of America--these young people need to work in order to support themselves or to assist their families. The alternative is for them and their families to be supported by welfare--an alternative which the advocates of child labor legislation quite evidently consider preferable. Although the question of survival does not come up for the youngster in middle-class suburbia or the wealthy socialite on Park Avenue, both rich and poor alike are pushed into enforced idleness, when they might yearn to use their energies and capacities in productive work in order to achieve the values they consider important.

The government, however, decides what is to their best interest and they (and their parents) are helpless in the face of the law. Unless they are beautiful enough or talented enough to earn money as child actors or models, or as independent business entrepreneurs, they usually have to earn what they can as caddies, yard workers, car washers, babysitters, or newspaper boys.

Today, the young teen-ager who wants to work must

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first obtain a job, get a printed form from his school and a doctor's certificate, fill out forms at the Board of Education and wait for working papers to be issued. Let alone the red tape involved, getting a job is no easy task. State laws seriously limit the types of jobs which a young person can even apply for. In New York State, for example, no boy under sixteen can work on machinery; pack paints; do electrical work; prepare compositions with poisonous acids; or erect, demolish, repair, alter, paint, or clean any building or structure. (Parenthetically, one might ask who is being protected: the adolescent or the adult union member?) In addition, there are few employers who are willing to pay the minimum wage of $1.50 an hour to an unskilled teenager who can only work part-time and whose working hours must be carefully supervised. The basic question is, Does the government have the right to decide where the self-interest of its citizens lies? No. The government has no right (morally, at least) to interfere with the relationship between parents and children unless a child's rights are being violated. If a child wishes to work, or it is deemed by his parents to be an economic or educational necessity, his rights are not being violated.

Understanding why the government has no moral right to interfere with the decisions a parent makes, requires an understanding both of the rights of children and the responsibilities of parents. All men are born with rights. Their fundamental right is the right to life. The adult human being sustains his life by exercising his rights to liberty and property--the child cannot. Human infancy and childhood last for many years and, during that time, a child is dependent on his parents or guardians for his survival. Since he has neither the knowledge nor the mature

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judgment to exercise many of his rights, his parents have the responsibility to do this for him. In common-sense terms, one can see that it would be ridiculous to talk about a child's exercising his right to vote, to run for office, to bear arms--or to totally plan his own diet.

What is the role of the government? Every child is a citizen of the country of his birth, and the government should be the ultimate protector of his rights, even against his parents. Precisely because an infant is so helpless, the government must be able to intervene between parent and child in the case of real abuse and endangering of life. This does not mean that the government should be able to interfere with the parents' right to exercise their responsibilities. The government is the child's ultimate guardian until he is able to sustain himself independently. For example, in the U.S., the government will protect a child's property by supervising the administration of any inheritance until he is old enough to exercise this right himself. In addition, if he suffers from a physical injury, disability, or illness which the state courts have reason to believe was the result of brutality or physical neglect, they may fine or imprison the offenders.

Child abuse, as literally and legally defined, occurs when a child is beaten or tortured, not allowed to learn to walk or speak, sexually abused, grossly neglected, worked to the point of physical and nervous breakdown, not allowed to have life-saving medical treatment, etc. (According to a 1966 U.S. Children's Bureau publication entitled, "The Child Abuse Reporting Laws," most states legally require health authorities and/or others who deal with children to report instances of what has come to be called the "battered child" syndrome.)

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Protecting a child's right to life does not mean that the State would have the right to pass laws requiring (1) that parents buy braces for their children's teeth, (2) that parents send their children to church, (3) that parents refrain from spanking a child in order to discipline him, (4) that parents teach one moral code in preference to another. These are but a few of the optional decisions that parents have the responsibility and the right to make for a child until he is old enough to decide for himself. They must also make decisions, on the basis of what they think is appropriate and/or what they can afford, about medical care, clothing, housing, a child's friends, etc. (Parents should also have the right to decide questions of the quality, type and extent of education which their children should have, but compulsory education laws have overridden individual judgment and context here.)

Similarly, the government should have no power to force a child to work or to prevent him from working. This is a decision which should rest with his parents. Depending upon their economic fortune (or misfortune) and upon their individual judgment, parents should have the right to decide if their child can or should work and where he should work. The only role the government should have is that of protecting the children from neglect or abuse in or out of the work situation. A family's economic context is enormously important. A child's survival may depend upon his working (and deferring his education until later) as it often did in the nineteenth century. It is not abusive to allow a young person and his parents to decide that he should work for his own self-interest or that of his family.

It is upsetting, to say the least, to examine some of the premises that underlie child labor legis-

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lation. The assumptions are that happiness is not achieved by productive work--that having to work is abusive--that work is therefore something to be avoided as long as possible. But work, per se, is neither exploitation nor abuse.

On the contrary, work is an important value in any man's life, and in the life of a child it can be a vital part of education for adulthood. A job can develop skills and give vital training and experience in the business world, and it can often be a possible key to a future career. Just because a child is not mature enough to survive independently, it does not follow that a child is not mature enough to do productive work.

Is it any wonder that children and teen-agers are often apathetic, cynical and bored in America today? The reasons for this extend far beyond child labor laws, of course, but such legislation contributes to the problem. It prevents young, ambitious youngsters from using their mental and physical capacities until early adulthood. Our culture makes them dependent. They have few exciting challenges to meet and no way to use their intellectual and physical capacities for personal development. Would you expect a young person to be happy about such a situation?

Eli Ginsburg graphically describes the plight of young people today in *Values and Ideals of American Youth* (Columbia University Press, 1961):

> It is indeed ironical that legislation and social mores tend to prolong the period during which young people are treated as immature and irresponsible precisely at the time when children are growing faster and physically maturing earlier. Vigorous and well-fed young people need rough physical

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> activity, but our society urges on them a sheltered and effortless life. They are eager to show their worth and to function usefully, but labor laws bar them from employment. They crave an imaginative life and the chance to manifest initiative, but most forms of responsibility are denied them because they are regarded as children. It would be entertaining if it were not tragic to contrast the place occupied in our society by the modern fully developed six-foot teenagers with that occupied by their physiological equivalents in the past. Throughout history, young adults have acted effectively as leaders in warfare, active members of political parties, creators of business enterprises, or advocates of new philosophical doctrines--whereas modern young people are expected to find fulfillment in playgrounds, juvenile spectacles and ice cream parlors.

Instead of letting children work, advocates of the mixed economy support child labor laws, minimum wage laws, compulsory education laws, and welfare legislation. The stated purpose of public education, for example, is to give every child his "rightful" heritage which includes "necessary" playtime and full educational opportunities (regardless of whether he or his parents want them).

Public schools frequently have inflexible curricula that are sometimes totally prescribed by law--the content of courses, how and when they are to be taught, textbook requirements, etc. The brighter the child, the more likely that public school will be a dull, routine affair in which he has little opportunity to develop his own interests. For example, he cannot choose at an early age to

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become a farmer, a mechanic, a member of an orchestra or even an itinerant tinker; he is required by law to go to school until he is sixteen. For many children, the solution to boredom is to become a dropout, and frequently dropouts are the so-called "underachievers," meaning that they are intelligent students who do not achieve according to their capacities. Why should they, when they are forced to use their capacities to pursue goals they don't want to achieve?

Compulsory high school education laws and welfare legislation have grown side by side in twentieth-century America. They form a vise which frequently binds young people to unchosen goals and boredom. Incentive is killed, because being productive is not required, allowed, or rewarded. But legislators are the last to see that the very welfare measures they espouse have a direct connection to the problems of juvenile delinquency and the rising crime rate. Is it any wonder that there are young punks who take advantage of the situation today? Research in the field of sociology corroborates this: "Detailed comparisons reveal that throughout the world the wealthy nations with complete welfare programs have been plagued with delinquency far in excess of that in 'the less well developed nations.'" (Arnold W. Green, *Sociology*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968, forthcoming 5th edition)

When incentive is killed, an honest young person has to learn to live with a great deal of frustration. We see the results of this frustration all around us in the appeal of the "hippie" movement and Ginsburg's apathetic "ice cream parlor" world. Only a few teen-agers are strong enough to hold on to the values they want to achieve and to find ways of doing so without giving up hope

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in the midst of the pressures and legislative abuses of our culture today. They deserve credit for having monumental personal strength. They certainly can't be said to have gotten much help from the adults in our society.

How can we help young people today? We can uphold a political philosophy which states that both children and adults have the right to pursue their own chosen goals, as long as they do not violate the rights of other men. We can educate ourselves and try to convince others that the so-called "mixed economy" is a one-way ticket to the loss of freedom, and that neither children nor adults have anything to gain from it, except further dependency. We can work for the gradual repeal of the welfare, educational, and labor legislation which is in itself, morally speaking, child abuse.

What will be the result? Children will be able to work, and to fulfill their ambitions, and the government will assume in this area its proper role as protector of children's rights. The idea that mass exploitation of children will result in a modern free economy is just as fallacious as the idea that it was an inherent aspect of the early Industrial Revolution.

If child labor laws are not repealed, what lies ahead? Further abuse. Welfare statists characteristically try to solve economic and social problems with additional welfare, relief, and "poverty" programs. Instead of granting citizens greater freedom to pursue their own goals, they make both children and adults more dependent upon government for their livelihood and security. Child labor laws, coupled with minimum wage laws and compulsory public education, have resulted in the creation of a large body of unskilled, inex-

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perienced, and purposeless young people. They are obviously unprepared and often seemingly unwilling to support themselves. What might be the next step?

The ultimate abuse has been suggested in the past year by both Secretary of Defense McNamara and Secretary of Labor Wirtz--registering and/or drafting all young people for work in civilian or military national service. (See *Persuasion*, May 1967.) Our government, which is unwilling to let young people work for their own self-interest, has proposed to coerce them, once they reach the age of eighteen, to work for the State.

It has been by a process of slow erosion (and abuse of rights) that children in this country are gradually being transformed from independent beings into natural resources, to be educated and employed as the government sees fit. Can a free society rest on such a foundation?

--Joyce F. Jones

(I am indebted to Elenore Boddy for invaluable research assistance in the preparation of this article.)

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REVIEWS

The Wrong Villain

The Other America by Michael Harrington
Penguin Books, Baltimore, Maryland, 1964

Michael Harrington's book *The Other America* should have read like a mystery. He names the crime--poverty--he shows us the victims--the unskilled, the aged, members of minorities, migrant farm workers--and provides us with all the clues to solve the mystery and name the villain.

The fact that he clouds the evidence, misinterprets the clues, names the wrong culprit and recoommends the same poison that made the victims ill in the first place proves how inept a mystery writer he would be--but, more importantly, casts serious doubt on his abilities as an economic analyst.

The Other America is the book that sparked the "War on Poverty." It claims that today there exist side by side two nations: one nation is affluent, moving forward economically and technologically; the other nation is poor, stagnating economically and socially, all but invisible to the majority of Americans. This "other America" is one of hard-core poverty that can only be helped, in the author's opinion, by massive doses of federal aid.

The book has been so influential largely because it is written in a tone of passionate indignation and righteousness, aimed more at arousing the moral conscience of the reader than presenting

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the facts in a scholarly way. Mr. Harrington states near the beginning of the book: "Throughout, I work on an assumption that cannot be proved by Government figures or even documented by impressions of the other America. It is an ethical proposition, and it can be simply stated: In a nation with a technology that could provide every citizen with a decent life, it is an outrage and a scandal that there should be such social misery. Only if one begins with this assumption is it possible to pierce through the invisibility of 40,000,000 to 50,000,000 human beings and to see the other America. We must perceive it passionately, if this blindness is to be lifted from us. A fact can be rationalized and explained away; an indignity cannot." (p. 24)

Harrington's claim, so basic to the impact of his argument, that there are between 40,000,000 to 50,000,000 inhabitants of this country who are invisible to the rest of us has been disputed and argued with by many people. He himself points out that there are lower estimates of the number of people involved based on different interpretations of the same government statistics. But, he says, "If my interpretation is bleak and grim, and even if it overstates the case slightly, that is intentional. My moral point of departure is a sense of outrage, a feeling that the obvious and existing problem of the poor is so shocking that it would be better to describe it in dark tones rather than to minimize it. *No one will be hurt* if the situation is seen from the most pessimistic point of view, but optimism can lead to complacency and the persistence of the other America." (Italics mine, pp. 171-72)

If what Mr. Harrington means is that no one will be hurt if he distorts the facts to make his point, and if one adds up the effects this book has had

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on our nation in the form of massive government intervention into our economy, the sense of frustration and hopelessness on the part of the poor of ever solving the problem, the racial disturbances in our major cities--one will realize that Michael Harrington's "pessimistic point of view" has indeed hurt many people, especially those people he is so passionately concerned with.

There are a great many things one could say about *The Other America*. One could attack it on the basis of faulty statistics, on its emotional tone which clouds important issues, and on the fact that it includes beatniks, bohemians, bowery bums and alcoholics in its survey of the poor. But one thing is clear. There *is* an economic problem in this country and millions of people are suffering because of it. Something has caused it, and it *is* an outrage.

But what has caused it? There is a crime. There is a victim. But it remains to be seen who or what is the villain.

Let us examine Mr. Harrington's main thesis: that in the past the poor were able to pull themselves out of their poverty-stricken state, but today there is a "culture of poverty" whose members are caught in a vicious circle because of automation, racial discrimination and inadequate government spending.

Mr. Harrington claims that for some people "progress is misery." "The other Americans are the victims of the very inventions and machines that have provided a higher standard for the rest of society...for them greater productivity often means worse jobs; agricultural advance becomes hunger." (p. 19) The result of this progress, according to Mr. Harrington, is that these people are caught in an environment that debilitates them;

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they lack skills, education, energy and hope, all of which are needed to pull themselves out of their ghettos.

But it has been demonstrated that automation is not the cause of unemployment, that in fact it leads to fuller employment and a generally rising standard of living. (See Joyce Jones' two-part article "Automation," *Persuasion*, June and July 1965, in which she analyzes the fallacies in the idea that automation causes unemployment and poverty.)

And certainly in the past racial discrimination was much more oppressive. There was a time when a Negro couldn't get into a medical school, couldn't get an office job and couldn't sit in the front of a bus. Certainly no one would argue that discrimination is worse today.

In 1890 the standard of living, working conditions and racial discrimination were much worse than they are today. But at the same time the poor were able to better themselves. They were able to pull themselves up out of their poverty-stricken condition. This is where and when the American concept of social mobility was born. Anyone *willing* to work hard to improve himself was *able* to do so, as Mr. Harrington himself acknowledges. Why? What has changed?

Let's look at his third reason for the trap poor people are caught in: lack of government spending. Perhaps here is a clue that will lead us to the real perpetrator of the crime.

Mr. Harrington emphasizes over and over again in his book what he calls the "paradox" of the welfare state. "Out of the thirties came the welfare state. Its creation had been stimulated by mass impoverishment and misery, yet it helped the poor

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least of all. Laws like unemployment compensation, the Wagner Act, the various farm programs, all these were designed for the middle third in the cities, for the organized workers, and for the upper third in the country, for the big market farmers....Indeed, the paradox that the welfare state benefits those least who need help most is but a single instance of a persistent irony in the other America." (p. 16)

But what are the welfare state benefits he complains of and how does he suggest improving them?

He complains about housing: "But the new public housing projects themselves have become a major problem. Many of them have become income ghettos, centers for juvenile gangs, modern poor farms where social disintegration is institutionalized. In addition, the destruction of old slum neighborhoods for public housing or Title I programs has resulted in mass evictions. The new public housing ing did not provide enough units for those who had been driven out to make way for improvement. The projects thus created new slums and intensified the pressures within the old slums, particularly for minority groups." (pp. 173-38)

Mr. Harrington's solution? A greater commitment by the federal government. For all those who would argue with him he says: "For some people the failures of public housing are cited as an argument against national involvement in this problem. This is a disastrous and wrongheaded deduction. With all that has been said about the inadequacies of the housing projects, it is clear that only one agency in America is capable of eradicating both the slum and the slum psychology from this land: the Federal Government. Time and time again, private builders have demonstrated that they are utterly incapable of doing anything." (p. 151)

A year after the appearance of Mr. Harrington's

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The Other America, a heavily documented book was published--Dr. Martin Anderson's *The Federal Bulldozer*--which exposed the fact that in a 10-year period, 1950 to 1960, private enterprise increased the supply of housing by 63 per cent while the federal government destroyed 126,000 dwelling units and added approximately 28,000 new units. So we see that Mr. Harrington's claim that private builders are incapable of eradicating slums is not true. Mr. Harrington also notes that a government official estimated it would take $125,000,000,000 of both public and private investment to end slums within twenty-five years--and adds, "Clearly this is an expensive business; clearly it is not beyond the bounds of possibility." (p. 151) But how has he answered the problem of the evictions of thousands of people at once through the government's use of eminent domain? What will happen to the people who will be forced to move out of their homes during this twenty-five-year period? Where will they go? They will be forced to stay in the slums, to double up with other families, while the taxpayers pay the burden of this government program.

He complains about the treatment of the aged: "They [the aged] are precisely the ones least equipped to deal with the bureaucracy of the welfare state. Some of the American poor have difficulty with the English language, and almost all of them are undereducated. There are those who develop their relations with welfare into a fine art, but there are many more who are literally terrified by the forms and apparatus of a relief office. This is doubly true for the aged. They are in failing health, and are completely and totally dependent upon the authorities. A trip to the relief office is a matter of life and death for them. And they tend to be bewildered by the routines of a world in which they did not grow up." (pp. 110-11) "The pessimistic, depressed, bewildered old person cannot be given a sense of dignity through some gigantic

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collective operation. His problem is precisely a loss in his own sense of individual worth and a lack of human relationships." (p. 115)

Mr. Harrington's solution? A greater commitment by the federal government. "If there were adequate funds, if the social workers were not overwhelmed by their case load, if the clinics were sufficiently manned and equipped, then it would be possible to escape from many of the evils of a bureaucratic regimen....To introduce human and individual relations between the aging and the society requires, not the restrictions of the welfare state, but the going beyond it." (p. 117)

And how would Mr. Harrington introduce human and individual relations once the government has taken over? Heavy taxation and government-induced inflation have already put the aged in a position where they do not have funds to care for themselves, which is what created the situation that leads Mr. Harrington to call for more government funds. Social workers are already overloaded with cases; more cases will not lessen their load. And with the advent of medicare, the work load of both workers and clinics has increased. As for human relations, is the following incident a sample of what we are to expect from socialized medicine?

The New York Times reported on September 24, 1967, that Great Britain's Ministry of Health (which has extended government programs as Mr. Harrington advocates) recently received complaints about a notice that appeared in a London hospital. "The notice, posted at Neasden Hospital for more than a year before it was reported to hospital authorities, said that no effort should be made to resuscitate anyone over 65 who had suffered a cardiac arrest. ...Those patients, the notice to doctors and nurses said, were to have medical treatment cards labeled 'NTBR' (not to be resuscitated)." Even though this

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policy has now been repudiated by Great Britain's Ministry of Health, it is an example of the kind of regulation that can and does come into being in an extended government bureaucracy. If we extend our own government concern for the aged as Great Britain has, what makes Mr. Harrington think that it will lead to, as he puts it, "human and individual relations between the aging and the society"?

Mr. Harrington also complains about the minimum wage laws: "The workers in the economic underworld are concentrated among the urban section of the more than 16,000,000 Americans denied coverage by the Minimum-Wage Law of 1961. They are domestic workers, hotel employees, bus boys, and dishwashers, and some of the people working in small retail stores." (p. 26) The welfare state "turned its back upon them. It passed an inadequate minimum-wage bill that excluded some of the most desperate rejects of the economic underworld...." (p. 42)

Mr. Harrington's solution? A greater regulation by the federal government. More and greater coverage by the minimum wage laws.

But the minimum wage laws have the effect of forbidding jobs to the unskilled. If employers are forced to pay $1.50 to a man who may be worth only $1.00, they will find ways to do without the man. What then happens to the man who might have been willing to work for $1.00 an hour? He is forced on the welfare rolls. A recent *Wall Street Journal* editorial (September 29, 1967), centering around a mass layoff of bootblacks in Washington, D.C., "valet, barber and shoe repair shops" because of a letter sent out by the D.C. Minimum Wage Board, reported that "what is happening to Washington's bootblacks has been happening to thousands of marginal and submarginal workers all over the country since the Federal minimum wage last year was raised

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and the law extended to millions of workers, chiefly in service business, previously not covered." The editorial goes on to say that it has been estimated that almost 700,000 marginal workers are now laid off annually and that "A sample check by the Labor Department suggests that in February 1968, when the minimum wage is scheduled to rise to $1.60 per hour, more than a million workers will be made jobless. Many of these are among the poorly educated and untrained who even when jobs are plentiful find work hard to get."

So again we come back to the question: Why are the poor today trapped in a culture of poverty when their economic equivalents in the past were not? What has changed? And we see that the single most influential factor is that the federal government has entered the picture. *This* is the key to the mystery. The real troublemaker is government intervention *itself*, not *inadequate* government intervention. Mr. Harrington has not only pinned the crime on the wrong factors, but is advocating that the villain redouble his efforts and expand his crime.

The welfare programs of the thirties did not solve the problem of poverty. They increased it. Traditionally, when government regulation did not enter the picture, one could work one's way up the economic ladder by hard work. But today--precisely because of such policies as public housing, minimum wage and social security, to say nothing of confiscatory taxation and welfare policies that penalize productive workers--it has become almost impossible for the poor to rise above the welfare rolls. The poor *are* the victims. And one must recognize that the villain is the government entering the marketplace.

--Elenore Boddy

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